

CLAIMS

We claim:

5 1. An HTML file format, the HTML file format comprising an HTML tag and a plurality of HTML data objects tags, wherein each HTML data object tag is associated with an HMTL data object displayed in a Web page, for redirecting an application program to an alternative source file for importing an underlying data source associated with at 10 least one HTML data object into the application program, comprising:

 a redirection attribute associated with at least one HTML data object tag that points to the alternative source file where the underlying source associated with the data object is stored.

15 2. The HTML file format of Claim 1, wherein the redirection attribute comprises a connection string that points to a location where the underlying data source is stored.

20 3. The HTML file format of Claim 1, wherein the connection string comprises a uniform resource locator (URL).

4. A method for redirecting an application program to an alternative source file to retrieve an underlying data source associated with a plurality of HTML data objects displayed in a Web page, wherein the HTML data objects are stored in HTML format, comprising:

- 5 receiving a user command selecting at least one of the plurality of data objects to import from a Web page into an application program;
- retrieving an HTML data object tag associated with the selected HTML data object;
- 10 determining if the HTML data object tag comprises a redirection attribute, the redirection attribute comprising a connection string that identifies an alternative source file where the underlying data source associated with the selected data object is stored;
- 15 if the HTML data object tag comprises a redirection attribute performing the sequence comprising:
 - retrieving the connection string from the redirection attribute;
 - 20 opening the alternative source file identified by the connection string;
 - retrieving the underlying data source; and
 - importing the underlying data source into the application program; and
 - 25 if the HTML data object does not comprise a redirection attribute, then importing the HTML data object from the Web page into the application program.

5. The method of Claim 4, further comprising:

- determining whether a redirection flag associated with the HTML data object is disabled;

if the redirection flag is not disabled, performing the sequence comprising:

retrieving the connection string from the redirection attribute;

5 opening the alternative source file identified by the connection string;

retrieving the underlying data source associated with the HTML data object; and

10 importing the underlying data source associated with the HTML data object into the application program; and

if the redirection flag is disabled, importing the HTML data object from the Web page to the application program.

6. The method of Claim 4, wherein the HTML data object is
15 selected from a list consisting essentially of TABLE, PRE, XMP,
LISTING, and PLAINTEXT.

7. The method of Claim 4, wherein the connection string
comprises a uniform resource locator (URL).